

Message Text

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12

ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6946

INFO AMEMBASSY ACCRA

AMEMBASSY BRAZILIA

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY SANTO DOMINGO

USMISSION EC BRUSSELS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L ABIDJAN 1182

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ETRD, EAG, EGEN, US, XX

SUBJECT: US POSITION ON NEW COCOA AGREEMENT

REFERENCE STATE 12368

1. SUMMARY. DCM CALLED ON MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE SAWADOGO TO PRESENT STATEMENT ON COMMODITY POLICY (REFTEL). SAWADOGO GRATIFIED BY STATEMENT, PARTICULARLY SINCE HE HAD READ EXCERPTS FROM JANUARY 15 STATEMENT BY TREASURY ASSISTANT SECRETARY PARSKY IMPLYING US DISINTEREST IN COMMODITY AGREEMENTS. SAWADOGO SAID IT WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY FOR USG TO MAKE ITS POLICY ON COMMODITIES CLEAR AT HIGH LEVEL, AND TO MAKE EVERY EFFORT CONVINCE PRODUCERS AND CONSUMERS, ESPECIALLY FRANCE, OF SINCERITY OF US READINESS TO SEEK AGREEMENT ON COCOA. HE SAID PRODUCERS, ESPECIALLY GHANA AND NIGERIA, ARE DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS THAT USG IS STALLING. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND ECON COUNSELOR CALLED ON SAWADOGO TO REITERATE
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US INTEREST IN REOPENING COCOA NEGOTIATIONS TO PRODUCE

ECONOMICALLY SOUND AGREEMENT AND TO PRESENT FRENCH TRANSLATION OF JOINT STATE/TREASURY PRESS RELEASE OUTLINING US COMMODITY POLICY. SAWADOGO HAD SEEN EXTRACTS FROM ASST SECY PARSK'S STATEMENT, WHICH HE SAID COMPLICATED GOIC POSITION, AS IVORY COAST MAY NOW BE ACCUSED OF FOLLOWING US LEAD, WHEN IN FACT IT WAS AND IS PREPARED TO TAKE INDEPENDENT STAND.

3. SAWADOGO READ CAREFULLY STATEMENT OF US COMMODITY POLICY. HE WAS PLEASED AT PHRASING OF PARA 4-B WHICH DESCRIBES AGREEMENT AS DEFICIENT IN A NUMBER OF ASPECTS RATHER THAN TOTALLY UNACCEPTABLE. HOWEVER, HE ASKED WHERE AND AT WHAT LEVEL, ESPECIALLY AMONG CONSUMING NATIONS, HAS SUGGESTION TO RENEGOTIATE BEEN MADE. HE STRESSED THAT NOW MORE THAN EVER, FOLLOWING THE PARSKY STATEMENT, IT WAS CRUCIAL THAT THE USG MAKE ITS POSITION ON COMMODITY POLICY ABSOLUTELY CLEAR. HE WOULD NOT PRESUME TO TELL THE USG WHERE, BUT HE MENTIONED THE ICCO IN LONDON, THE COMMODITIES COMMISSION IN PARIS, OR BILATERALLY TO PRODUCING AND CONSUMING NATIONS. SAWADOGO STATED THAT NOW WAS OPPORTUNE MOMENT FOR A FORMAL USG DEMARCHE ON REOPENING COCOA NEGOTIATIONS. GOIC ITSELF HAD RECENTLY MADE APPROACH TO FRANCE ASKING GOF TO RECONSIDER ITS POSITION ON NEW COCOA AGREEMENT. SAWADOGO SAID IT IS CRITICAL THAT USG DO ITS BEST TO CONVINCE CONSUMING NATIONS, ESPECIALLY FRANCE, THAT NEGOTIATIONS SHOULD BE REOPENED. SAWADOGO RETITERATED GOIC'S POSITION THAT AGREEMENT BEARS NO RELATIONSHIP TO REAL MARKET FORCES. SAWADOGO TOUCHED ON A PRODUCERS' MEETING IN BRAZIL IN LATE FEBRUARY PRIOR TO WHICH USG SHOULD SEIZE EVERY OPPORTUNITY TO MAKE ITS POSITION CLEAR.

4. SAWADOGO SAID THERE WAS A GENUINE LACK OF CONFIDENCE AMONG AFRICAN NATIONS REGARDING USG INTENTIONS WITH RESPECT TO THE COCOA AGREEMENT. GHANA AND NIGERIA, IN PARTICULAR, ARE DEEPLY SUSPICIOUS THAT USG IS STALLING, AND UNWILLING ENDORSE PROMOTION CAMPAIGN FOR COCOA SINCE SOME US COMPANIES ARE SEEKING COCOA SUBSTITUTES. IVORY COAST HAS BEEN HARD PRESSED ON POLITICAL BASIS TO CHANGE ITS STAND IN SUPPORT OF AFRICAN, LDC AND PRODUCER SOLIDARITY.

5. CHARGE REITERATED TO SAWADOGO THAT USG STILL DEFINITELY WANTS TO REOPEN NEGOTIATIONS AND ACHIEVE WORKABLE AGREEMENT AND CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT HE WOULD CONVEY SAWADOGO'S VIEWS TO THE AMBASSADOR AND TO THE DEPARTMENT. SMITH

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